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SELECTION OF THE COUNTY SEAT
OR SEAT OF JUSTICE.

In pursuance of an Act of the General Assembly, we the Com-
oners appointed for the purpose of viewing a suitable and fit place
he Seat of Justice for the County of Pocahontas, have agreed to
e the Seat of Justice for said County, on the land of John Bradshaw
an old barn stands in his peach orchard this ~~xxx~~ 6th day of March,

Abraham McNeel
John Bradshaw
James Tallman
John Jordin
Jacob Warwick
John Baseter.

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FORMATION OF POCAHONTAS COUNTY.

In the month of March, 1821, the general assembly of Virginia passed a bill entitled "An Act to provide for the formation of a new county out of parts of Bath, Pendleton and Randolph" Section first of the bill defined the boundaries of the new county, the area of which was 760 square miles. In 1824 the southern boundary line was changed, and 60 square miles was taken from Greenbrier, thus increasing the area to 820 miles, its present area. The same section also declared that the new county should be styled and known as Pocahontas, in memory of, and in honor of the Indian princess of that name. Another section named the place and fixed the time at which the first Court should be held.

THE FIRST COUNTY COURT.

In conformity with the before mentioned act, the first County Court ever held for Pocahontas County, convened at the home of John Bradshaw, at what is now the village of Huntersville, on the 5th day of March, 1822, the day appointed for that purpose. The following justices of the peace, each holding commissions signed by his excellency, Thomas Mann Randolph, Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, namely: John Jordan, William Poage, Jr., James Tallman, Robert Gay, George Poage, Benjamin Tallman, John Baxter and George Burner. John Baxter qualified the Court, each member of which took the oath of office, the oath of fidelity to the Commonwealth, the oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and the oath against dueling. William Poage then in turn administered the several oaths to John Baxter, and the Court was declared open for the transaction of such business as might properly come before it.

John Jordan then presented a commission from the Governor appointing him high sheriff of the county, after which he gave bond in the penalty of $30,000, with Abraham McNeel and Isaac McNeel as his bondsmen, and took the several oaths prescribed by law. Josiah Beard was then appointed clerk of the Court, and with Thomas Beard, George Poage and James Tallman entered into a bond of $3,000, took the oaths and at once entered upon the discharge of his duties. John Reynolds was then appointed attorney for the commonwealth. He at once took the oaths and entered upon the discharge of his duties. Sampson L. Mathews was recommended as a fit and proper person to execute the office of surveyor of lands. William Hughes was then appointed constable for the lower district (Little Levels) it being the same bailiwick in which the said William Hughes had served when it was a portion of Bath County. He gave bond in the penalty of $500, with William McNeel and Robert McClintic as his securities. Then James Cooper was appointed constable in the district called "Head of Greenbrier" (now Greenbank District) whereupon he and his bondsmen, William Slaven and Samuel Hogsett, entered into a bond in the penalty of $500, conditioned according to law. Cyrus Curry and Johnson Reynolds, having previously been licensed to practice law in the inferior and superior courts of the commonwealth, were, upon their motion permitted to practice law in the courts of the county. On motion the court then adjourned until 10 A. M. the next day.

March 6th. the court convened as per adjournment [illegible] all the

justices present except Robert Gay. John Jordan, who the day before had qualified as high sheriff, came into court and asked that his son, Johnathan, be appointed as his deputy and the record says: "The court being of the opinion that the said Johnathan Jordan is a man of honesty, probity and good demeanor, and he is therefore permitted to qualify; whereupon he took the several oaths." The court then proceeded to appoint overseers or surveyors of the various roads, completed and prospective, within the county and the names of those who assumed charge of the highways and thoroughfares through the mountains of what a few years before had been the wilds of West Augusta, were as follows: James Callison, William Edmiston, John Hill, John Cochran, Alexander Wadell, John McNeel (little John), Robert Moore, Martin Dilley, Benjamin Arbogast, William Sharp, William Hartman, and Joseph Wolfenbarger. Robert Gay was then appointed commissioner of the revenue; whereupon he came into court, and with William Cackley and John Baxter entered into a bond in the penalty of $1,000, after which he took the several oaths required by law.

The court then proceeded to organize the county militia, as a part of the military establishment of the State. The following named persons were named as "fit and proper" to fill the respective offices, and the governor and council requested to appoint the same: John Baxter for colonel commandant of the county of Pocahontas; Benjamin Tallman for the office of lieutenant colonel; William Blair for major; Boone Tallman, William Arbogast, Henry Herold, Isaac Moore, and Milburn Hughes, captains; Andrew G. Mathews, Robert Warwick, William Morgan, William Young and James Rhea, for lieutenants; Jacob Slaven, James Wanless, Samuel Young, and James Callison, for ensigns.

Abraham McNeel was recommended to the Governor as a suitable person to discharge the office of coroner for the county. A license was granted to Travis W. Perkins to keep a house of entertainment, who thus became the first hotel proprietor in Pocahontas County. Jacob W. Mathews, Thomas Hill, John Slaven, James Callison, William Edmiston, John Gilliland, William Cackley, Samuel Cummings, John Bradshaw, Joseph Moore, Patrick Burfee, James Waugh and James Sharp were each recommended as suitable persons to be appointed justices of the peace, and the court having put both the civil and military machinery in complete running order, adjourned, and Pocahontas County entered upon her career as one of the integral factors of the "Old Dominion."

MAY TERM OF 1822.

This term convened at the house of John Bradshaw on the 7th day of the month, and the first grand jury that ever sat for the body of Pocahontas county was empannelled and sworn. It was composed of the following named persons: Samuel Dougherty, foreman, John Mooney, George Kee, John Johnson, Joseph Freed, James Grimes, James Bridger, Samuel Waugh, Henry Herold, James Lewis, John Grimes, Morris Hughes, William Blair, Andrew Edmiston, Samuel Hogsett, James McNeel, William McNeel, John Moore, Lanty Lockridge, Johnathan Griffin, and Abraham Seabord. After receiving their instructions they retired to consider of their presentments; soon after they returned into court, having found two indictments, one against David H. Smith for assault and battery, and another against Josiah Bean for obstructing the public highway.

OTHER EARLY SETTLERS.

Other early settlers in Pocahontas County were Thomas Drennin, William Sharp, Robert Moore, John Johnson, Thomas Johnson, Robert Gay, William Poage, Patrick Slaterly, Robert Duffie, Thomas Brock, Lawrence Drennin and John Smith, who settled in what is now Edray District.

James Lewis, Alexander Waddell, James Brinnell, John Switzer, Richard Hill, William Clendenen, Abraham McNeel, Nathaniel Kennison, William Kennison, David Kennison, Josiah Beard, Thomas Beard and John Beard, who settled in what is now Little Levels District.

In Greenbank District the earliest settlements were made just prior to the Revolutionary War and the family name of some of the settlers who owned land in the Greenbank District between the years 1770 and 1799, were Gillispie, Given, McKeamys, Tallman, Townsend, Moore, Rucker, Hartman, Ingram, Jarvis, Warwick, Duncan, Sloan, McCartee, Cartmill, Taylor, Conrad, Kerney, Coberly, Nottingham, Rumbaugh, Covelaugh, Munson, Griffin, Wooddell, Lamb, Trimble, Kerr, Patton, Galligher, Galford, Higgins, Kincaid, Donovan, Mackley, Armstrong, Dysard, Taber, Tackett, Sutton and others not mentioned in the records. Many of these names have disappeared from the citizenship of the county, yet there remains the Tallmans, Warwicks, Taylors, Conrads, Nottinghams, Wooddells, Kerrs, Galfords, and Suttons, substantial citizens of the county.

These pioneers, regardless of where they settled, had to live in a very simple and rough way. Their houses were built with logs hewn and well notched down, covered with clap boards held on by weight poles, no nails were used in putting on the roof as all nails at that time were made in blacksmith shops east of the Alleghenies and the demand so great that they were not obtainable west of the mountains. The floors were made of puncheons; that is logs split in slabs and dressed smoothe with an adz. Frequently big slabs were used for tables and three legged stools for chairs and peffs in the walls for wardrobes, and the side walls were full of portholes for the purpose of defense against the Indians. Every home possessed a shop made rifle, which was considered the most valuable and useful article about the home.

The dress of men consisted of a fur cap, moccasins, pants and a fringed hunting shirt. Only the simplest ways of living were possible. The women worked hard from morning until night and the men had many things to do. No hours were spent in idleness; there were lands to be cleared; crops to be raised and harvested, game to be killed and the hides to be dressed. There is reason to believe, however, that these pioneers were a contented and happy people. They were all on equal footing, socially and financially and were a neighborly, help ful people towards each other.

Besides the hardships of the early settlers in establishing their homes, it was necessary to keep a constant lookout for hostile Indians and to have all means of defense ready in case of a sudden attack. The Indians were so crafty and deceitful that only the closest watchfulness saved the settlers from danger and death. In Greenbank District a fort was built called the Warwick Fort. Women and boys were taken to this fort and drilled with the use of a gun so that they would be prepared to defend themselves in case their homes were attacked. While there is no recorded history on the subject, it is a fact nevertheless that the early settlers lived in a state of suspense until the Indians were driven from the County

Greenbank District probably took the lead in industrial advancement. The first Tub Mill and Saw Mill in the Greenbank Community was owned and operated by the pioneer Wooddells; probably Joseph Wooddell, the Revolutionary War veteran, who settled on the lands of Abraham Ingram and Thomas Cartmill. Cartmill conveyed his land to Abraham Ingram on June 13th, 1798, and Ingram conveyed to Wooddell about 1800. Ingram may have developed the water power for this mill. The lumber that finished the old Colonial mansion house of Jacob Warwick's at Clover Lick was sawed on this mill and was furnished by Mr. Wooddell about 120 years ago. A Tilt Hammer was installed at this mill which was greatly needed by the pioneers in making